

PS 1044

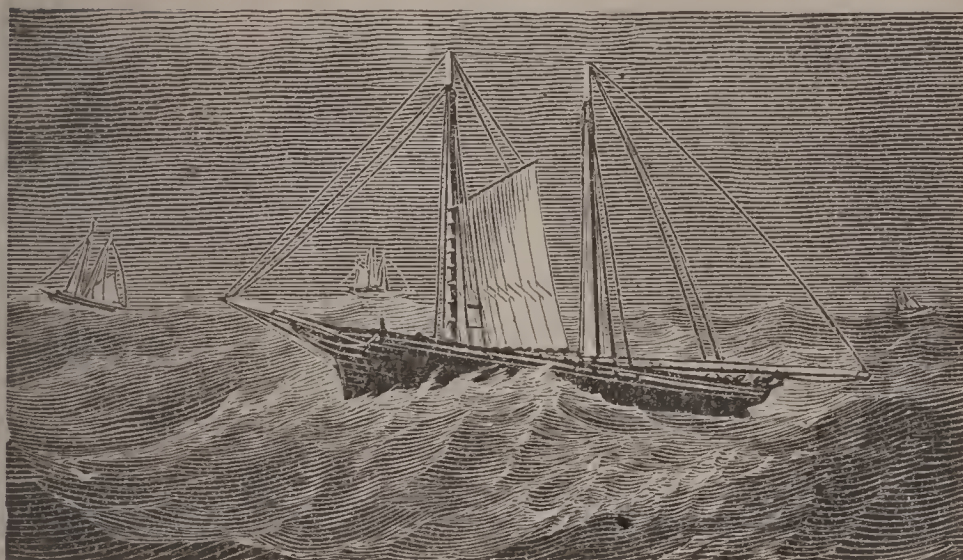
.A78 C3

1881

Copy 1

CAPE ANN

AND A



Winter's Fishing Trip

TO

GEORGES STORMY BANKS.

BY B. ATWOOD.

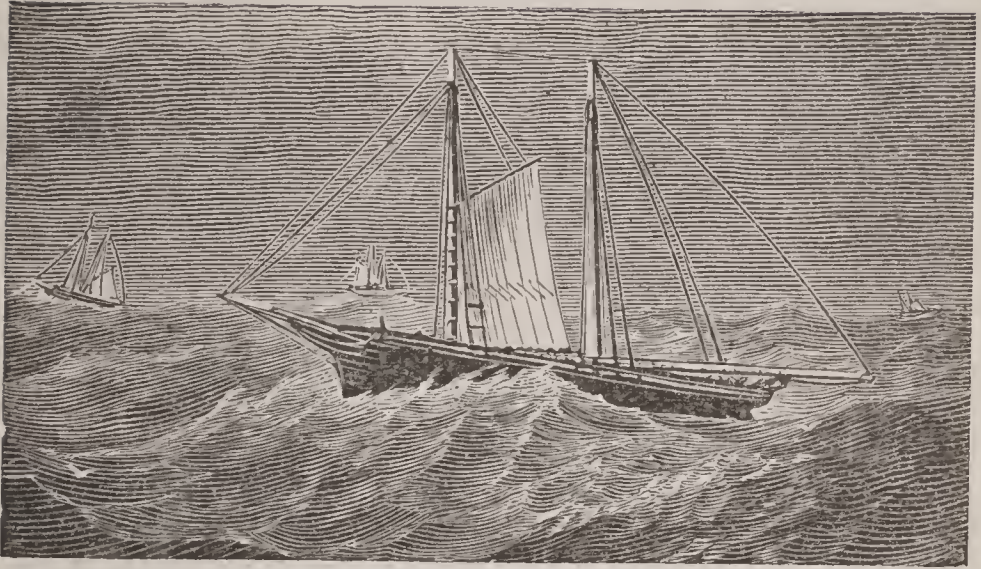
GLOUCESTER MASS.:

PRINTED AT THE CAPE ANN ADVERTISER OFFICE.

1881.

CAPE ANN

AND A



Winter's Fishing Trip

TO

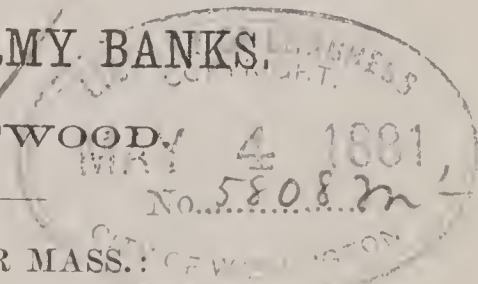
GEORGES STORMY BANKS.

BY B. ATWOOD.

GLOUCESTER MASS.

PRINTED AT THE CAPE ANN ADVERTISER OFFICE.

1881.



PC 1044
A78 C3
1881

CAPE ANN AND A WINTER'S FISHING TRIP TO GEORGE'S STORMY BANKS.

1

Cape Ann, thy storm-beat hills and rock-bound
shore,
Home of the fishermen, from times of yore,
Thy harbor safe and ever faithful lights,
Hope of the mariner in storms and nights.

2

Old Cape, thy home amid the ocean lies,
The conflict still to wage with wintry skies ;
Thy granite cliffs for ages have withstood
The ceaseless beatings of the briny flood.

3

And the gnarled oaks, left on thy rocky hills
To battle with the storms, are standing still.
Fit emblem of that hardy fisher band
That find a home along thy sea-girt strand.

4

The dwellers in these cots along this strand,
Descendants of that firm old pilgrim band
That left their homes and crossed the swelling
flood,
To find a place in peace to worship God !

5

This fearless race by nature seems designed
To roam the wintry seas, and toil to find
The finny treasures of the mighty deep,
And on its restless waves their vigils keep.

6

For generations past this Cape has been
The chosen spot of hardy fishermen ;
And in its harbors safe their vessels ride,
Secure from winter storms and changing tide.

7

When wintry days come on and storms are rife,
These toilers of the sea maintain the strife
To wrest their daily bread from ocean's store.
In short respites to rest upon the shore.

8

In darkest night or sunshine's brightest day
These daring mariners pursue their way
Far o'er the wintry seas and foaming tide,
On George's treacherous bank in storms to ride.

9

Then firmly anchored on the Bank they ride
Amid its boisterous seas and changing tide ;
Their sails snug furled, in patience then they wait
To tempt the scaly tribe with dainty bait..

10

Their berth well chosen on the fishing ground,
And hungry schools of fish come swimming
 'round,
Then brawny arms with many a sturdy pull.
Pursue their work until the decks are full.

11

As night comes on and winds begin to blow.
Their catch well dressed and stored away below,
Their hatches well secured and battened tight,
Then set the watch and hoist the signal light.

12

The night comes on apace, dark clouds arise
From the northeast and flit across the skies,
And darkly settle down before 'tis morn,
And furious gusts of snow and sleet come on.

13

The watch upon the deck calls up the crew,
Deals out more cable and the strads renew.
And active hands bend on the riding-sail—
The winds increase, and blows a fearful gale.

14

The day comes on ; and oh ! a frightful sight
That's hid beneath the darkness of the night—
The tide across the wind in torrents pours
To aid the angry strife of ocean's roar.

15

Wave piled on wave, drove by the tempest blast,
 With awful crash and roar go hurrying past.
 This oaken vessel strong then seems to dare
 This champion struggle of the sea and air.

16

With anchor firmly set in bottom strong,
 Her cable new, three hundred fathoms long,
 She like a sea-bird rides the ocean's breast,
 And mounts its waves and splits their foaming
 crests.

17

And this staunch schooner seems endowed with
 life—
 Her oaken timbers glory in the strife,
 And on its giant waves and caverns deep,
 And ever ready for the fearful leap.

18

She struggles bravely on through the dark day,
 And o'er the mountain billows plows her way;
 Amid the raging storms in safety rides,
 And hurls the icy spray from her hard sides.

19

Night settles down upon this scene of strife;
 The elements contend as if for life;
 Waves break in awful crash and thundering roar,
 While furious gusts of wind and sleet come o'er.

Neptune sits umpire on his throne of night,
 Nods his approval at the fearful sight ;
 And porpoises and monsters of the deep,
 They race in fierce delight and plunge and leap.

Swordfish and sharks and thrashers fiercely fight
 To help along the carnival of night ;
 And his pet whales rush in with awful breach—
 Their music is the sea-gull's dismal screech.

He sits upon his throne and views the scene.
 And grins a smile of satisfaction keen ;
 His loyal subjects all have blown their blast,
 Till the infernal regions stand aghast.

This furious struggle waged through the long
 night,
 The elements give in and cease the fight,
 And to this Georgesman the victory yield,
 Well beaten on their chosen battle-field.

This schooner staunch the victor in the strife.
 Sits on the water like a thing of life ;
 Neptune his umpirage has well fulfilled—
 As he retires he growls out. “ *Essex-build.* ”

The skipper from his deck, through the long
 night,
 Looks on with practised eyes and scans the sight—
 His buoyant schooner rides of all the best,
 And hope revives within his silent breast.

He seeks his cabin then, some rest to find,
 And thoughts of home will flit across his mind,
 Of wife and little ones left on the shore—
 From their snug cot they hear the ocean's roar.

She rides it out; the sea grows smooth again;
 The hardy crew comes up the rails to man;
 With baited hooks and lengthy lines they sound,
 And find the hungry fish have kept the ground.

The clouds disperse, the day is bright and fair—
 Then strip for work and pull them by the pair;
 Each for himself he labors with a will,
 And hauls away for life his kid to fill.

The work goes on until the sun grows low,
 Then dress their fish and stow away below;
 Then fleet the cable and the strads renew,
 While many a joke is passed among the crew.

30

The decks well cleared and ready for the night,
 All made secure, then hoist the signal light ;
 A breeze from the northwest begins to blow,
 Then set the anchor watch and go below.

31

The skipper takes his book, marks down the
 catch,
 Cautions the crew then faithfully to watch
 The progress of the night, the sea and sky,
 And sound a quick alarm if danger's nigh.

32

Then down below in their snug cabin warm,
 They little heed the sunshine or the storm ;
 Then light their pipes and have a social smoke—
 Some nymph upon the shore gets a sly poke.

33

Some one is hit, then more will soon begin,
 And put in a sly hint to help the din ;
 The married ones look on and see the fun,
 And shake their sides until the row is done.

34

Through the long night she splits the wintry seas
 And throws the spray upon her decks to freeze
 In icy sheets upon her kids and rails,
 And bind in tighter grasp her cords and sails.

35

She rushes through the waves ; the night wears on
And throws the icy spray till glint of morn
Shines on her icy masts and frozen sails
And on her oaken sides and fishing rails.

36

The morn comes on, and still the cold winds blow ;
Too rough to fish, the crew stay most below,
Talk o'er their voyage, its prospects pro and con,
Then smoke their pipes ; and so the day goes on.

37

As night comes on with cold and frosty air,
Stars glitter in the skies so bright and fair ;
Before 'tis morn the wind gives up the row,
The sea with a dull thud beats on her bow.

38

For dawn of morn the crew impatient wait,
Get out their lines, put on the tempting bait,
Cast over leads and have a faithful sound,
And find the hungry tribe have left the ground.

39

The skipper then looks on with anxious eye,
Watches the progress of this faithful try—
The tide is slack—the lines make a good sound—
Makes up his mind 'tis best to shift the ground.

40

Then clear the cable coil from frozen spray,
 Now man the windlass brakes and heave away ;
 This active crowd are on their muscle now—
 The anchor soon is up and on the bow.

41

Hoist up the jib and let her wear around,
 We'll try in shoaler water on the ground ;
 Most likely large, if we should find 'em there.
 And if we do we'll soon make up a fare.

42

Now loose the foresail, boys, and hoist away ;
 Work lively now, for 'tis a pleasant day ;
 A lively breeze of wind, the tide is fair,
 The water's shoaling fast—she soon is there.

43

Now, boys, haul down the jib, we'll have a sound,
 I think we're far enough upon the ground ;
 And then with baited hooks their lines run down,
 Just twenty fathoms deep, 'tis a plumb sound.

44

The fish are there, they have not long to wait,
 In eager haste they grasp the tempting bait—
 A pair of monster cod on every line ;
 Let go the anchor, boys, the weather's fine.

45

Now fish for life ! this is a dangerous place !
 Most money to the man that wins the race.
 See, Sandy's hooked a pair ; 'tis nip and tuck !
 Hang to 'em, boy, for life ; you're in good luck.

46

This hardy crowd wade in with a strong pull,
 With rousing cod then soon their kids are full ;
 The deck-pens next filled up and well piled on—
 Full forty tubs before the day is gone.

47

Then go in, boys, and fish away till night,
 We'll eat our grub and dress by lantern light ;
 And if the weather's fine another day,
 We'll have a trip and get her underway.

48

At glimpse of morn this hardy crew of men
 Cast over lines—the fish are there again ;
 With savage grasp they swallow down the bait,
 Big halibut and cod, no time to wait.

49

Their lively work has used the bait up soon,
 With thirty tubs of fish before tis noon ;
 The wind is fair, the chance, then, we'll not miss ;
 Now man the windlass, boys, get out of this.

50

A splendid trip of fish, with prospects bright
 They leave the dangerous bank before 'tis night ;
 The wind from the southeast blows a strong
 breeze—

She travels like a race-horse o'er the seas.

51

Well off the bank before the set of sun,
 Then reef the mainsail, boys, and let her run ;
 To steer her straight let each man do his best,
 'Tis breezing on the course west-nor'-west.

52

She rushes wildly on throughout the dark night,
 Twelve hours from George's bank to Thacher's
 light ;

She lugs her canvas well, and throws the spray,
 And makes her fifty leagues before 'tis day !

53

At early dawn she passes Norman's Woe,
 In waters smooth, then calls the watch below ;
 Get ready, boys, we'll take the foresail down,
 We'll anchor here just off abreast the town.

54

That hawker on the shore with a keen eye,
 He soon comes off their halibut to buy ;
 His scales are in his dory stowed away—
His beam may be correct—I cannot say.

55

He takes the skipper's hand with a firm grip :
 " How many halibut, old boy, this trip ?"
 " Five thousand good and strong," is his reply ;
 Now watch the *twinkle* in that hawker's eye.

56

The skipper then inquires, " What do you pay ?"
 " Seven and ten, for this is shipping day ;
 Now I mean business, boys, don't you forget ;
 This is the highest price that we've paid yet.

57

Now what say, skip ? Let's close the bargain soon,
 I wouldn't give half price this afternoon."
 " Well, boys, I guess we'd better let 'em go ;
 Take off the hatch and pull 'em from below."

58

That hawker ~~is~~ shrewd, he knows his business
 well ;
 That *sour mitten's on*, he'll make it *tell* ;
 To cull and weigh, O that is his delight,
 He makes *all sour* and *grey*, the *rest* are white.

59

The halibut all weighed and in his boat,
 No happier man than he is there afloat ;
 He chuckles to himself, and with a grin
 Says, " Now, old boys, you are well taken in."

The halibut weighed off, the tide serves right,
 Then warp her to the dock before 'tis night;
 The owner, he comes down with pleasant grin,
 Takes hold and lends a hand to get her in.

To pitch them out and weigh, they are not long,
 A rousing trip, full sixty thousand strong!
 Now clean up good and then wash down the decks,
 Then for the office, boys, and get your checks.

Now, boys, we've made a trip, so now good bye;
 Don't leave the codfish till it is July;
 Then mackerel will be here, all large and fat,
 Then take your seine on board and give 'em bat.

*Copies of this ballad may be obtained of B. At-
 wood, and at the "Old Corner" Bookstore,
 Gloucester, Mass.*

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1881, in the
 office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.]

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 785 344 2